



OUR APPROACH TO FACILITATION AND FACILITATION TRAINING

Why use Rhonda Sparks and Illuma Consulting for facilitation or learning about facilitation?

The role of a facilitator is to assist the group to reach its outcomes: guiding, collaborating, challenging and supporting along the way. We understand that an event does not belong to the facilitator – it belongs to the client, the group and to the individuals involved.

The meeting facilitator primarily manages the process of the event, allowing those with the knowledge and expertise to concentrate on content. During a facilitation event we remain in an impartial, process mode. Prior to your event we are in process consultant mode and afterwards we can work with you on a critiqued review and next steps.

A simple definition of a facilitator is that we help groups do their best thinking. Illuma is highly skilled at designing meeting structures to capitalise on the diverse knowledge and perspectives of people in the room. We utilise a range of appropriate tools / process that help access creative and evaluative thinking as well as decision making and attaining commitment to those decisions.

Meetings in general are notoriously unproductive, yet an important part of every business. Many companies underestimate the real cost of holding a meeting and therefore have no way of assessing the cost in lost time and lost opportunity to the company if the meeting is not a success. Hiring a professional facilitator can greatly increase the productivity of meetings.

Return on investment for contracting a facilitator is difficult to measure, however some estimates from Canada and USA indicate a 35-45% increase in effectiveness in meetings, with about 30% overall reduction in time. This can be much higher if your existing meeting culture is poor, if the stakes are very high or if the meeting is addressing a serious problem that needs a resolution and implementation of an outcome. One of the most important advantages in using a facilitator with meetings is a greater level of commitment to decisions after the meeting.



Rhonda's Holistic Framework of Facilitation© framework gives some idea of the complexities involved with facilitating.

Illuma does not have an “off the shelf” approach to facilitation assignments.

We tailor our processes to suit the needs of individual clients taking into account: drivers for the process; the organisational culture; the context of the event / project; who and how many people will be involved; time pressures; relationships; budget and more.

ABOUT RHONDA SPARKS

Rhonda Sparks (formerly Rhonda Tranks) is the Director and Principal Consultant at Illuma. She has decades of experience encompassing: HR, Organisational Development, Process Facilitation, Training and Adult Education, Management and Leadership, Coaching and Consulting.

Rhonda's management and consulting experience has been developed in a variety of roles and industries in Australia, Mexico, USA and across Asia and Europe. She has facilitated hundreds of meetings ranging from: board retreats; large stakeholder engagement events; planning meetings; navigating organisations and groups through restructures; meetings where the group has become dysfunctional (including overt or repressed conflict); mapping new directions through to team development events.

She has extensive experience in a range of facilitation approaches and is familiar with using a range of tools and processes needed for different types of meetings and events. She is also highly skilled at reading the needs of the group and adapting processes to maintain focus on outcomes whilst attending to interpersonal issues that can derail a meeting.

Rhonda has specific expertise in:

- Process Facilitation - meetings, retreats, conferences: strategy direction and alignment, problem solving and decision making, stakeholder engagement, relationship building
- Organisational Change: restructures, new directions and the impact on staff, stakeholders, relationships and outputs / effectiveness
- Team development and team coaching - particularly teams that have "lost their way" or become dysfunctional
- Training and Leadership Development
- Coaching and Mentoring - particularly facilitators and leaders



Rhonda is a Certified Professional Facilitator, Master (CPFM) with the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) and a member of the International Coach Federation. She has been a global assessor with the IAF and has held various local and global governance roles. She has presented at 15 International Facilitation Conferences and regularly runs international webinars for the association. She was inducted into the IAF's Hall of Fame in 2017. That year she formed a partnership with a Chinese consulting firm to deliver facilitation training across China and mentor the firm's consultants to deliver her facilitation programs in Chinese under license. She is currently in the process of establishing a similar relationship with facilitation colleagues in India.

[Connect and read Rhonda's posts on LinkedIn](#)



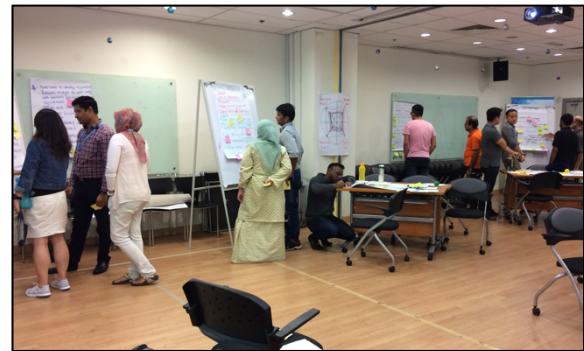
Deep dialogue session in 3-day management retreat for international corporation's China operations



Leadership development program with International Organisation based in South Korea



Facilitation course participants “learning by doing” during a practice session. 2 day core program. Canberra, Australia



“Carousel critique” of action plans during team development retreat, Malaysia

WHY LEARN FACILITATION WITH US?

Rhonda’s background is in learning and development, particularly experiential learning and training design. For many years she has trained and mentored others in Group Facilitation - both process facilitation and learning facilitation. Her training programs are practical, meaningful and relevant.

Illuma’s 2-day “The Essential Facilitator” workshop (previously titled “The Foundations of Facilitation”) is aligned with the IAF’s Core Competencies. This program has developed from its first inception in the mid 1990’s. Since then hundreds of facilitators have attended this program in its different iterations and some have become CPF (Certified Professional Facilitators) with the IAF.

As a response to the Covid19 Pandemic Rhonda redesigned her core facilitation workshop to be run virtually. It is now 5 x 3-hour sessions over 4 weeks with project work in learning groups between. *The Essential Facilitator On-Line* covers both in-person and virtual facilitation and the sixth program is scheduled for October 2023. Being virtual allows participants from different countries to attend and interact. The 4-day Holistic Facilitation workshop has been “resting” until after the Pandemic is over. It is scheduled to re-launch in China later in 2023.

A range of theories, approaches and practices are explored through our own integrative framework for facilitation and our model for “blended” facilitation (in-person, virtual and hybrid). Participants experience and learn how to use a range of methods in the right context. Everyone gets the opportunity to be involved in practice sessions and feedback. Individual coaching / mentoring sessions with Rhonda are also available after the course.

We can also collaborate with you to develop a better meeting culture throughout your organisation – including regular team meetings, information sessions and important decision-making meetings.

ABOUT ILLUMA CONSULTING

Illuma Consulting Pty Ltd Registered as a company in Australia Illuma Consulting Trust ABN 48 122 345 437

Illuma Consulting is a 21st century micro business that operates using all that today's technology offers. Illuma's business model allows it to be nimble and flexible. We outsource non-core functions and work with experienced and trusted international associate consultants, strategic partnerships and our excellent network of contacts depending on the size and location of an assignment. We have a permanent arrangement for support staff: one that ensures high levels of service and quality control for our clients yet maintains flexibility and keeps costs to a minimum.

Illuma's ultimate aim is for our clients (individuals and groups) to make and implement wiser choices as they grapple with increasing complexity and rapidity of change. Our role is to act as a catalyst for exploring and attaining positive change, through facilitation, coaching, training and development. Our expertise lies in developing and drawing out the wisdom within - encouraging people to shift perspectives, approach problems with fresh insights, make appropriate decisions and implement them so they successfully achieve the outcomes they want.

Illuma's mission is to work with our clients to achieve better ways, better performance, better relationships, better results and ultimately much better organisations. We achieve this through:

- Personal Development: coaching, mentoring and training
- Team Development: team coaching, training and facilitation
- Organisational Development with particular focus on: organisational change and transition, resilience, collaborative exploration and decision-making, process facilitation, developing more effective and productive collegial relationships.

Rhonda works internationally and within Australia, using a blended approach incorporating in-person and virtual work depending in the needs, context and situation..

RHONDA SPARKS
facilitator | coach | celebrant

illuminating pathways for change

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